

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4595

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MANILA 06329

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SHUM, RP

SUBJECT: ELECTION AFTERMATH: MANILA'S CARDINAL CALLS

- FOR FULL HEARING ON ELECTION FRAUD

1. SUMMARY: IN RESPONSE TO CONTINUED ACRIMONY OVER WIDESPREAD FRAUD IN THE APRIL 7 ELECTION, MANILA'S ARCH-BISHOP, CARDINAL SIN, HAS ISSUED AN OPEN LETTER CALLING ON CITIZENS TO COME FORWARD AND FILE CHARGES IF THEY WITNESSED FRAUD AND ON COMELEC TO "PUNISH THE GUILTY REGARDLESS OF POSITION." THIS, HE FEELS, IS "THE ONLY WAY TO PEACE." SIN TOLD CHARGE HIS EARLIER DRAFTS OF LETTER WERE EVEN STRONGER BUT WERE POLISHED BY HIS ASSOCIATES. RELATED EDITORIAL IN ARCHDIOCESE NEWSLETTER WARNS THAT "SMOULDERING DISSATISFACTION...MAY EXPLODE INTO SOMETHING MORE TERRIBLE AT ANY TIME" AND THAT COMELEC MUST PROVE "TO THE SATISFACTION OF EVERYBODY" THAT ANY INVESTIGATION IS NOT A "WHITEWASH." END SUMMARY.

2. MANILA'S ARCHBISHOP, JAIME CARDINAL SIN, PUBLISHED A SIGNED POST-ELECTION "OPEN LETTER," DATED APRIL 13, IN HIS ARCHDIOCESE'S BIWEEKLY NEWSPAPER "COR MANILA." (IT HAS NOT BEEN REPORTED IN OTHER MANILA MEDIA.) THE CARE-FULLY-WORDED LETTER EXPRESSES CONCERN THAT WIDESPREAD

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CHARGES OF ELECTION FRAUD HAVE MADE NATIONAL UNITY "MORE INACCESSIBLE THAN EVER." WITHOUT BLAMING SPECIFIC PARTIES, CARDINAL SIN URGES ALL CITIZENS TO DOCUMENT FRAUDS THEY HAVE SEEN AND TO FILE FORMAL CHARGES, AND HE URGES THE GOP, ESPECIALLY COMELEC, TO HOLD A "FAIR AND PUBLIC HEARING" AND TO "PUNISH THE GUILTY REGARDLESS OF POSITION IN LIFE AND SOCIETY." THIS IS, HE SAYS,"THE

ONLY WAY WE CAN BRING CALM TO THE PRESENT UNSETTLED
ATMOSPHERE. THIS IS STILL THE ONLY WAY WE CAN STILL THE
DIVISIVE AND ACRIMONIOUS VOICES IN OUR MIDST. THIS, I
MIGHT ADD IN CONCLUSION, IS THE ONLY WAY TO PEACE."
FULL TEXT OF THE CARDINAL'S LETTER FOLLOWS IN PARA 5.

3. CARDINAL SIN TOLD CHARGE APRIL 19 HIS LETTER WAS MORE
STRONGLY WORDED IN EARLIER DRAFTS AND HAD BEEN TONED DOWN
FOLLOWING CONSULTATIONS WITH RELIGIOUS COLLEAGUES.

4. EDITORIAL IN SAME APRIL 15 ISSUE OF "COR MANILA,"
WRITTEN BY THE CARDINAL'S CLOSE ASSOCIATE, EX-NEWSMAN
FELIX BAUTISTA, SPELLS OUT THE CARDINAL'S ATTITUDE
SOMEWHAT MORE BLUNTLY: QUOTE: UNLESS THE CITIZENS SHOW
THEIR CONCERN, UNLESS THEY PROVE BEYOND CAVIL THAT THEY
WILL NOT BE PARTY TO THE COMMISSION OF FRAUDS -- AND THIS
APPLIES PARTICULARLY TO ALL ELECTION WORKERS WHO MAY HAVE
BEEN COERCED OR INTIMIDATED INTO BEING A PARTY TO THE
ANOMALIES -- THEN THE SMOULDERING DISSATISFACTION WILL
PERSIST, WITH THE ATTENDANT DANGER THAT IT MAY EXPLODE
INTO SOMETHING MORE TERRIBLE AT ANY TIME.

- ON THE OTHER HAND, UNLESS THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
PROVES, TO THE SATISFACTUON OF EVERYBODY, THAT IT IS IN
EARNEST ABOUT THE PROSECUTION OF EVERYONE INVOLVED IN
POLL ANOMALIES, THAT IT IS SERIOUS ABOUT GETTING TO THE
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ROOT OF THE CHARGES AND NOT IN BRINGING ABOUT A WHITE-
WASH, THEN THE FAITH OF THE PEOPLE IN ITS FAIRNESS AND
IMPARTIALITY WILL BE SHAKEN, PERHAPS IRREPARABLE.

- THOSE PEOPLE WHO ARE DISGRUNTLED OVER THE ELECTION
RESULTS, OR WHO DOUBT THE AUTHENTICITY OF THOSE RESULTS,
ARE EVEN NOW THINKING OF ADOPTING MEANS TO EXPRESS THEIR
DISSATISFACTION IN A MANNER CONTRARY TO DEMOCRATIC
PROCESSES. SUCH THINKING MUST BE DISCOURAGED, FOR THAT
IS NOT THE WAY TO ACHIEVE UNITY AND PEACE. END QUOTE.

5. FOLLOWING IS FULL TEXT OF CARDINAL SIN'S OPEN LETTER:
QUOTE: IN MY LETTER TO YOU BEFORE THE ELECTIONS, I ASKED
ALL OF YOU, AFTER THE VOTING WAS OVER, TO UNITE AND JOIN
HANDS IN THE COMMON TASK OF BUILDING A BETTER NATION.
I ASKED THE WINNERS TO BE HUMBLE IN VICTORY AND THE
LOSERS TO BE GRACIOUS IN DEFEAT.

- NOW THE ELECTIONS ARE OVER AND THE RETURNS HAVE BEEN
COUNTED. BUT THE POST-ELECTION ATMOSPHERE HAS BEEN
BECLOUDED BY A WELTER OF CHARGES AND COUNTER-CHARGES.
PARTISAN FEELING CONTINUES TO RUN HIGH AND THE UNITY WHICH

I HAD HOPED WOULD BE ACHIEVED SEEMS TO BE MORE
INACCESSIBLE THAN EVER.

- THE CHARGES AND COUNTER-CHARGES BEING EXCHANGED ARE
SERIOUS. BOTH PARTIES, FOR INSTANCE, HAVE ACCUSED EACH
OTHER OF COMMITTING ACTS OF TERRORISM ON ELECTION DAY.
OTHER CHARGES RANGE FROM THE WIDESPREAD USE OF FLYING
VOTERS, THE STUFFING OF BALLOT BOXES, THE TAMPERING OF
ELECTION RETURNS ALL THE WAY TO FOREIGN INTERVENTION AND
AN ALLIANCE WITH A GODLESS IDEOLOGY.

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4596

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MANILA 06329

- AN ATMOSPHERE SUCH AS THIS IS DANGEROUS AND SOMETHING
MUST BE DONE TO CLEAR IT. WE MUST NOT ALLOW PASSIONS TO
BE INFLAMED, DISSATISFACTION TO FESTER AND TENSIONS TO
INTENSIFY.

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- FOR THE AIR TO BE CLEARED, AND FOR THE PROCESS OF
NORMALIZATION TO BE HASTENED, TWO THINGS MUST BE DONE:

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- FIRST, ALL CITIZENS, REGARDLESS OF PARTY AFFILIATION,
WHO WERE WITNESSES TO THE COMMISSION OF ELECTORAL FRAUDS,
MUST SUBSTANTIATE AND DOCUMENT THOSE FRAUDS AND THEN FILE
CHARGES AGAINST THE PERSON OR PERSONS INVOLVED; AND

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- SECOND, ALL THE DULY CONSTITUTED AUTHORITIES, THE
MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS PARTICULARLY, MUST
GIVE A RESPECTFUL HEARING TO THESE CHARGES, CONDUCT AN
UNBIASED AND IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION AND THEN, AFTER DUE
PROCESS, PUNISH THE GUILTY AND ABSOLVE THE INNOCENT.

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- UNLESS THIS IS DONE, THE EMOTIONALISM WILL CONTINUE
TO RAGE ON, AND THERE WILL BE NO PEACE. UNLESS THIS IS

DONE, THE FAITH OF THE PEOPLE IN THE SANCTITY OF THE
BALLOT, AND THEIR CONFIDENCE IN DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES WILL
BE SHAKEN.

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- I CALL ON ALL CONCERNED CITIZENS, THEREFORE, TO RE-
AFFIRM THEIR FAITH IN DEMOCRACY BY COMING FORWARD WITH
FIRST-HAND INFORMATION OF ELECTION IRREGULARITIES. I
URGE THEM TO PRESENT THEIR CHARGES BEFORE THE COMMISSION
ON ELECTIONS WHOSE SWORN CONSTITUTIONAL DUTY IS TO UPHOLD
THE CAUSE OF CLEAN AND FAIR ELECTIONS.

- I ALSO CALL ON ALL LAWYERS IN METRO MANILA TO
MANIFEST THEIR CONCERN FOR TRUTH AND FREEDOM, JUSTICE AND
PEACE, BY OFFERING THEIR SERVICES TO SUCH CITIZENS AS MAY
NEED THEIR HELP.

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- FINALLY, I CALL ON THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS TO
OPEN ITS DOORS TO ALL THOSE WHO MAY WISH TO SEEK REDRESS
FOR THEIR ELECTORAL GRIEVANCES. I URGE IT TO INVESTIGATE
ALL CHARGES BROUGHT TO ITS ATTENTION, TO GIVE EVERYONE A
FAIR AND PUBLIC HEARING, AND TO PUNISH THE GUILTY REGARD-
LESS OF POSITION IN LIFE AND SOCIETY, AND REGARDLESS OF
PARTY AFFILIATION.

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- THIS IS THE ONLY WAY WE CAN BRING CALM TO THE PRESENT
UNSETTLED ATMOSPHERE. THIS IS THE ONLY WAY WE CAN STILL
THE DIVISIVE AND ACRIMONIOUS VOICES IN OUR MIDST. THIS,
I MIGHT ADD IN CONCLUSION, IS THE ONLY WAY TO PEACE.

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- GOD BLESS YOU AND REMEMBER, I LOVE YOU ALL VERY
DEARLY. JAIME CARD. L. SIN, APRIL 13, 1978. END QUOTE.
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Message Attributes

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